



ONE MISSION, TWO PARISHES

Saint Timothy's & Saint Luke the Evangelist
Catholic Parishes, Forest Hill & Blackburn South

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WEEKLY BULLETIN: SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR B

REACH OUT IN LOVE AND MERCY: MARK 6: 32 - 34



Readings this week: Job 7:1-4, 6-7; Psalm 146; 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23; Mark 1:29 - 39.

Gospel Reflection ~ Greg Sunter

This week's gospel follows directly on from last week's reading and, as is typical with Mark's gospel, the events occur on the very same day. The urgency of the gospel is obvious in this week's reading; Jesus had a very busy 24 hours! Having launched his public ministry in the synagogue earlier that day, Jesus accompanies his new disciples to meet some of their family and have a meal. However, on arriving at the home of Simon and Andrew, they find Simon's mother-in-law is sick. Unlike the public displays of his healing power that preceded and will follow this episode, Jesus does not say anything but simply takes the woman by the hand and helps her up. Her response of beginning to wait on Jesus and his disciples is a faith response and a recognition of who Jesus is. A theme that runs through this gospel is that the disciples never fully understand who Jesus is. Here, a woman who has just met him recognises him as the Messiah and begins to serve him.

Still on the same day, we see the expansion of Jesus' healing ministry. On this one day he has cast an unclean spirit out of a possessed man in the synagogue, healed Peter's mother-in-law of a fever and then healed the crowds of people who came to the door. The next morning he announces that they will take the ministry to the whole region of Galilee. In a very simple way, the gospel of Mark has described the growth of Jesus' ministry from very humble isolated examples to a deliberate reaching out to the people of an entire region.

Historical Context – Capernaum: Jesus appears to have made Capernaum his base after leaving Nazareth. He may, in fact, have based himself at Simon Peter's house. There are many references in the gospels to Jesus' actions in Capernaum. Archaeologists have identified the house in Capernaum that they believe to be Simon Peter's house – less than 100 metres from the Capernaum synagogue. Evidence reveals carved inscriptions and symbols that identify both Jesus and Peter. The house appears to have been used as a 'house-church' until a church was built on the site in the 5th Century. Excavations of the site can be seen today.

Have you thought? Simon's Wife? In this week's reading, it is Simon's mother-in-law who is healed. This obviously means that Simon is married. However, there is no mention whatsoever about his wife. Is she alive or dead? Do they have children? We have no indication. It is not until the writings of Paul (1 Cor 9:5) that we learn Simon Peter was indeed married and that his wife accompanied him on his travels. Perhaps this visit to his family home was to announce to his wife and family that he had decided to follow Jesus and give up fishing.

Living the Gospel – Prayer: In the midst of an extremely hectic 24 hours where Jesus effectively launches his public ministry, Jesus takes time to go aside to a lonely place and pray. The passage tells us that it was 'long before dawn' that he did this. It may have been his usual practice to pray early in the morning or he may have been restless after the events of the previous day and the thought of what lay ahead. Nevertheless, Jesus provides us with a model of using prayer to reflect on events and to prepare ourselves for the day ahead.

REACH OUT IN ...

Whitehorse Deanery
Eastern Region
Archdiocese of Melbourne

Rev Father Gerard
Parish Priest

Sonya O'Farrell

Part-time Parish Secretary

Wednesdays,

Thursdays & Fridays

10.00am - 2.00pm

SUNDAY MASS

ST: & SL: Saturday Vigil @ 6.00pm

Sunday ST: @ 10.30am Australian

5.00pm - Vietnamese

& SL: @ 8.30am

WEEKDAY MASS & SL: ROSARY

ST: Weds. & Thurs. @ 9.15am

Fri. @ 10.00am

1st Wednesday of the month

@ 10.00am Mass of Anointing.

SL: Tues. @ 5.00pm

Wed., Thurs. & Fri. @ 9.30am

Sat. @ 9.00am

RECONCILIATION

SL: Saturday 9.30am - 10.00am &

5.30pm - 5.50pm

SL: EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed
for Adoration Wednesday

Start: 7.00pm | End: 8.00pm

MACS Catholic Primary School

21 Stevens Road, Vermont, 3133 Vic

Tel: (03) 9878 4188

Ms. Anne Maree Jones **Principal**

Email: principal@sttims.catholic.edu.au

Website: <https://sttims.catholic.edu.au/>

MACS Catholic Primary School

46 Orchard Grove,

Blackburn South Vic 3130

Tel: (03) 9877 4023

Mrs. Clare Ryan: **Principal**

Email: principal@slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

Website: slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

Prayer to Saint Timothy

O God, who adorned Saint Timothy with apostolic virtues, grant, through his intercession that, living justly and devoutly in this present age, we may merit to reach our heavenly homeland. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Patron Saint of stomach and intestinal disorders.

Prayer to Saint Luke the Evangelist

O St. Luke, you were chosen to reveal in preaching and writing God's love for the poor. Moved by the heavenly Spirit of Love, you detailed the life of Jesus, showing His divinity and His genuine compassion for all human beings. Help those who already glory in God's name to persevere in one heart and one mind and inspire all people that they may hear the Good News of Salvation. Amen

Patron Saint of artists, physicians, surgeons, students and butchers.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this weekend all who are sick, especially Kit Bing Fan, Penny Pitcher, Tony Keaney, Kathryn Holmes, Therese O'Donoghue, Stewart Davis, Mark, Jerry Donoghue, Margaret Hayes, Kevin Bolton and all those Parishioners unable to be among us this weekend. For all who have died recently, for the casualties of war in Ukraine, Israel and Gaza and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially James Heywood, Margaret Howard, Carmel McCormick, Jaime Narciso, Frederick Bradley, Bernardino Marques, Peter Shannahan, Josef Radinja, John O'Hagan, Leo Belot, Robert Withers, Alan Maher, Wanda & Anthony Rusc, Thevathasan Saverimujji, Roger Patte, Michelle Gooden and Jaime Flores. May they rest in peace.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK: **Ordinary Time ~ Monday:**

St Agatha, virgin, martyr; **Tuesday:** St Paul Miki and companions, martyrs;

Thursday: St Jerome Emilian or St Josephine Bakhita, virgin; **Saturday:**

St Scholastica, virgin. **Masses this weekend:** Preface V of the Sundays in Ordinary Time, Eucharistic Prayer II; Eucharistic Acc. No. II.

SL LITURGICAL ROSTERS FOR FEB - JUNE: Signup clipboards are available this weekend in the Church foyers at the 6.00pm, 8.30am and 10.30am Sunday Masses and for the next two weekends. Any new volunteers from either **SL** or **ST** are also invited to record your contact details and preferences of time and ministry(s) please.

ST RITE OF BAPTISM this weekend for Samuel Francis Sevilla, who is Abigail and Francis' son. Please make them all welcome.

WELCOME BACK TO ST & SL PRIMARY SCHOOLS WHO RETURN FOR THE 2024 SCHOOL YEAR.

All the very best to the Students, Staff and Families as First Term gets underway this week. Let's keep both school Communities in our Prayers throughout the coming year. **ST** Primary School will join the Parishioners for weekday Mass next Friday morning @ 10.00am to seek God's blessing on their 2024 School Year. **SL** Primary School will join the Parishioners for weekday Mass next Friday morning @ 9.30am to seek God's blessing on their School Year as well.

VERMONT CATHOLIC EDUCATION HUB: Marwin Austerberry, Eastern Region Regional General Manager (Ph: (03) 9427 6400) with Anne Maree Jones, **ST** Principal, and Fr Gerard, Parish Priest, met this past week for the first time about this matter. Marwin shared the following information:

- **MACS** is working on a K - 12 fresh and revitalised vision for Catholic Education for this area
- Access to a streamlined Catholic Education trajectory is important
- St Timothy's, Holy Saviour and Emmaus College are committed to the 'BIG' picture for Catholic Education here which includes: being a follower of Christ today, the Christian Story and the Catholic ethos
- A proposal is being prepared for the MACS' Board and then the Archbishop for support and approval
- When and if support and approval is granted it will take the rest of 2024 to work through all the necessary issues to be ready for 2025

MELBOURNE CATHOLIC: Pilgrims of hope called to prayer in 2024 🙏

A VOCATION VIEW: Christ raises up, from among our midst, those called to **the Consecrated Life** so that they might be **unique signs of the Kingdom** and "to be all things to all people." (1 Cor 9:22) We pray for those who have left everything to follow Him + **World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life, Feb 2.**

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: "Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed...He told them, 'Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.'" Mark 1:35, 38 In today's Gospel reading we see a perfect example of stewardship. Jesus gives His time to do all that God wishes - healing the sick and preaching. But before He begins, Jesus takes time to be alone with God in prayer. It is through prayer, spending time with God, that we are given the graces needed to do what He wishes us to do. Praying before acting is a great habit to develop. (**ST:** Weekly First Collection Presbytery Envelopes: \$203; Thanksgiving Stewardship Envelopes this week: \$345; Vietnamese Donation: \$185.20; Monthly direct debits & credit cards for Stewardship \$815; Monthly direct debits & credit cards for Presbytery \$330; **SL:** Last week's Church Stewardship Envelopes: \$397.50; Last week's Presbytery Stewardship Envelopes: \$489.45; Monthly direct debits & credit cards for Stewardship \$2016.50; Monthly direct debits & credit cards for Presbytery \$1622.50).

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

WEEKEND PARISH MINISTRY ROSTER

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

SATURDAY	6:00 PM SL	3 AND 4 FEBRUARY	Joe Ferlazzo	10 AND 11 FEBRUARY	Melina Barcellona
	6:00 PM ST		Volunteer		Volunteer
SUNDAY	8:30 AM SL		Olive Hammill		Margaret Gearon
	10:30 AM ST		Volunteer		Genevieve Hemsley
	5.00PM ST		Thuy Vu & Nhat Nguyen		Dieu Nguyen & Loc Le

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

SATURDAY	6:00 PM SL	3 AND 4 FEBRUARY	Ian Holmes	10 AND 11 FEBRUARY	Sonya O'Farrell
	6:00 PM ST		Volunteer		Volunteer
SUNDAY	8:30 AM SL		Margaret Gearon		Volunteer
	10:30 AM ST		Volunteer		Volunteer
	5.00PM ST		Hung Dinh		Hoang Nguyen

SLIDE OPERATORS

SATURDAY	6:00 PM SL	3 AND 4 FEBRUARY	Volunteer	10 AND 11 FEBRUARY	Volunteer
	6:00 PM ST		Michelle Chen		Michelle Chen
SUNDAY	8:30 AM SL		Volunteer		Lee Min Yee
	10:30 AM ST		Manny Gonzalez		Toan Tran
	5.00PM ST		Toan Tran		

SL WELCOMERS 3/4 FEB

6:00 PM	Volunteer	SL CHURCH CLEANING	10 th Feb – Maree's Team
8:30 AM	Volunteer		Maree Moss, Allen Leung,
10:30 AM	Volunteer		Serena Ng & Lynda Kilroe-Smith

HOSPITALITY THE BASIC LITURGICAL MINISTRY

SL WELCOMERS 10/11 FEB

6:00 PM	Volunteer	ST CHURCH CLEANING	10 th Feb @ 8am
9:30 AM	Volunteer		Toan Tran, Dao Dinh,
10:30 AM	Volunteer		Hieu Nguyen & Dieu Nguyen

SL CHURCH FLOWERS

3rd Feb - Ellen Donoghue
10th Feb – Nikhita Paul

ST CHURCH FLOWERS

January - Parishioners

ST COUNTERS

This week Team 8:
Fela Colasanti & Chin L Tay
Next week Team 1:
Owen Grealy & Anthony Yeo

Love and Mercy: Mark 6: 32 – 34

Parish Groups & Contacts

Lectors, Registrars, Collectors,
Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist,
Slide Projector Operator & Rosters

ST: Corrie Quimbo 9412 8499

SL: Margaret Gearon 0409 807 135

Baptism Preparation

ST: Mary Italiano 9412 8499

Vietnamese Community

Hoang Nguyen 0422 400 116

Andy Tran 0422 382 109

Vietnamese Youth

John Dinh 0448 977 037

Parish Collection Preparers

ST: Barry Silvester &

Michael Kawalevski

Stewardship Counters

SL: Dale Dixon - 0433 885 087

Steve Kilroe-Smith - 0404 864 232

Parish Pastoral Council

As we are one Mission now, it has been suggested that we require only one Chair?

Parishes Safeguarding Committee

Theresa Nguyen, Mary Italiano,

Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

Janette Clark - 9877 2292

Fr Gerard - 9877 2292

Parish History

SL: Margaret Gearon - 0409 807 135

Whitehorse Deanery - Fr Gerard

Finance Committee

Bernard Negline

Parish Accountant

SL: Hall Hire

Sonya O'Farrell @ the

Parish Office - 9877 2292

Church Sacristan

ST: Margaret King & Hoang Nguyen

SL: Greg Grant - 0401 644 474

Church Housekeeping

ST: Margaret King 9412 8499

Church Cleaning & Flowers

SL: Megan McLean - 0419 347 693

Church Linen

SL: Beryl Kanagalinggam

Parish Garden Maintenance

ST: Des Connors, Leo Watson,

Anico Yee & Vietnamese Community

SL: Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

Holy Communion to the

housebound - Fr Gerard

Parish Choirs

ST: Mary Italiano & Theresa Nguyen

SL: Lina & Maria Mafi

0411 136 043

Parish & School Fete Committee

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

School Advisory Council

ST: Ms. Anne Maree Jones 9878 4188

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

School Parents' Association

ST: Ms. Anne Maree Jones 9878 4188

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Freecall: Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

Parish Contacts:

ST: John McCoy

SL: Tony Lobo &

Steve Kilroe-Smith

THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK: Fr Daniel Serratore MGL says today's Gospel calls us out of our comfort zone to live out Jesus' mission in our lives. Mother Hilda has another tip on how to surrender to God's will. Fr Tony Percy focuses on the healing of Saint Peter's mother-in-law and the relationship it has with the resurrection. Trish McCarthy says that we should stop and spend time remembering what God's done for each of us, and Deacon Josh Clayton says our parish communities can learn a lot from observing the local country show. Plus, more great music!

ORDER OF MALTA LOURDES DAY MASS – SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY

2024: For some years now, the Order of Malta has organised an annual Lourdes Day Mass to provide an opportunity to pray for the sick and infirm particularly for those who would not otherwise have the possibility of visiting Lourdes. The Mass will take place again on **Saturday, 10th February at 10.30am at St Patrick's Cathedral**, with the Archbishop as the principal celebrant. For further information, please contact: Sauro Antonelli AM on 0411 250 288.

VIETNAMESE (LUNAR NEW YEAR) 'TET NGUYEN DAN' AND CHINESE

NEW YEAR is being celebrated next weekend on 10th February this year, the Year of the (Wood) Dragon; a symbol of success, growth and progress according to the South China Morning Post. Wood represents vitality and creativity, while the dragon is related to success, intelligence and honour. Our local Vietnamese Community is celebrating it this way:

- Fri 9 Feb: Vietnamese New Year's Eve at 7:30 pm (Vietnamese)
- Sat 10 Feb: First day of the Year of the Dragon Peace Prayer Service at 7:30 pm (Vietnamese)
- Sun 11 Feb: Second day of the New Year Prayer Ceremony for Ancestors at 5:00 pm (Vietnamese) Celebration party after Mass
- Mon 12 Feb: Third day of the New Year Prayer service for Work at 7:30 pm (Vietnamese)
- Chúc mừng năm mới (Happy New Year in Vietnamese)

LENT 2024 WITH THE CATHOLIC GUY, BRUCE DOWNES:

Lent is a time when we can grow closer to God and prepare our hearts for the true meaning of Easter. Be inspired. Be refreshed. Be renewed! For 40 days you will receive a short, practical and inspiring video in your inbox every morning to help you make this Lenten journey more powerful and prayerful. This program is **FREE** and you can sign up here: <https://BruceDownes.org/Lent>

SAFETY STATEMENT: We are committed to a safe and nurturing culture for all children and vulnerable persons in our Church. Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Blackburn South holds the care, safety, wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons as central and fundamental responsibilities of the Church. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

Raise your voices ... Entrance Antiphon: O come, let us worship God and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.

Response to the Psalm: Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! He bore our sickness, and endured our suffering. Alleluia!

Eucharistic Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men, for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.

MAJELLAN FAMILY MEDIA: [Caring for the sick](#)

THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF SERVICE: Invite parishioners and friends to join them celebrating their 80th year with the launch of a new book: *Graced Beyond Telling* by Corrie van den Bosch **Date & time:** 15 February, 7.00 p.m.

Place: St Thomas the Apostle school hall, **RSVP:** (for catering purposes) by 10 February ring Corrie on 0425 736 747.

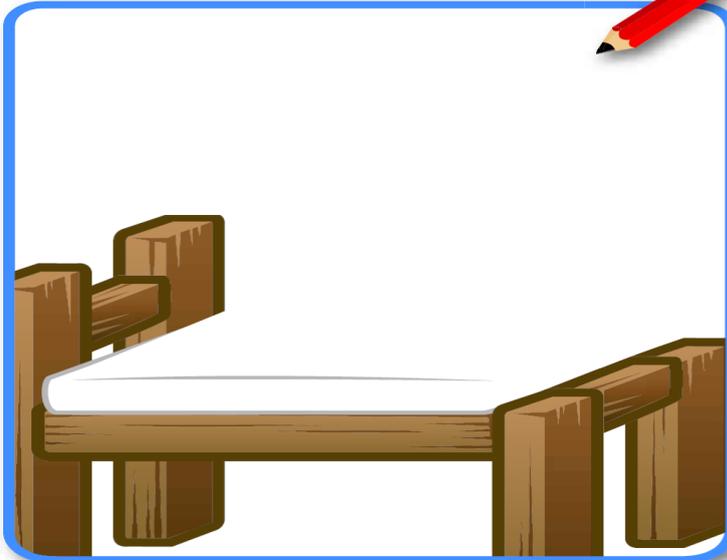
YEAR OF PRAYER – 2024:

* [Sacred Space = Your daily prayer online &](#)

* [Pray As You Go](#) is a daily prayer session, designed to go with you wherever you go, to help you pray whenever you find time, but particularly whilst travelling to and from work, study, etc.

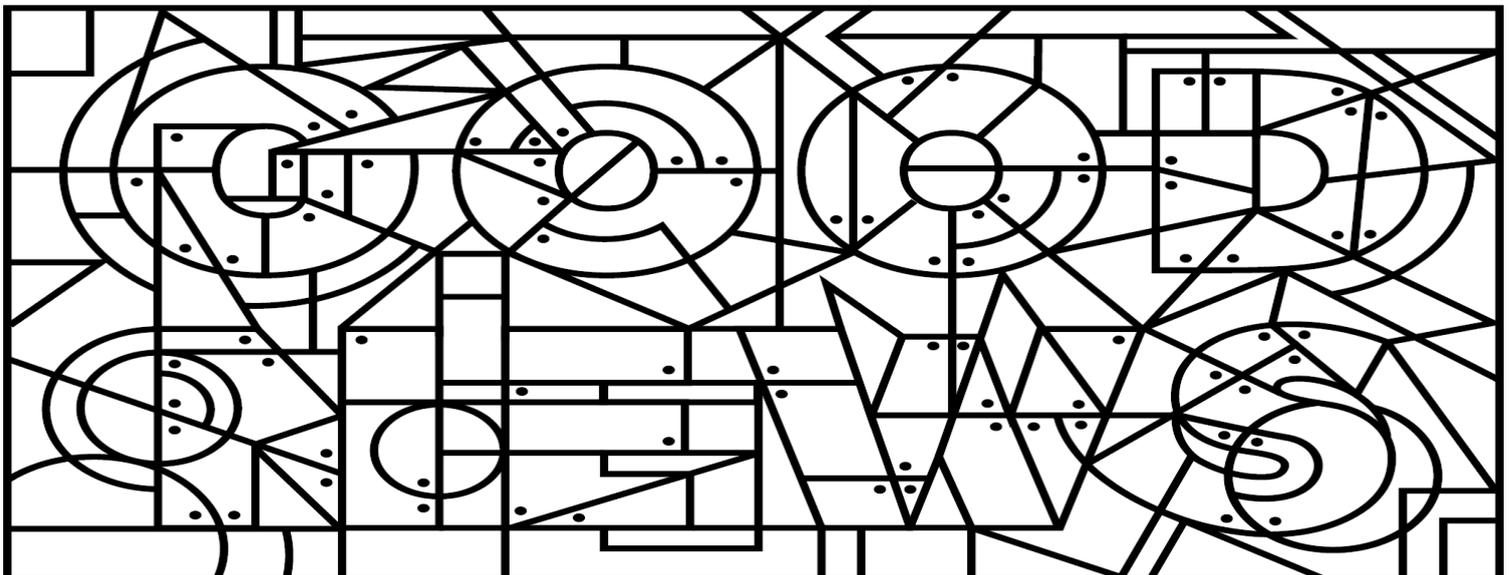


Draw Jesus healing Simon's sick mother-in-law



Jesus went away to be alone and pray. Where are some places that you pray?

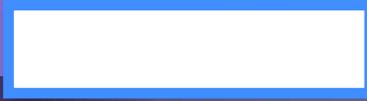
Colour in all the shapes that contain dots to reveal what Jesus wants everyone to know.





Jesus is the Good News

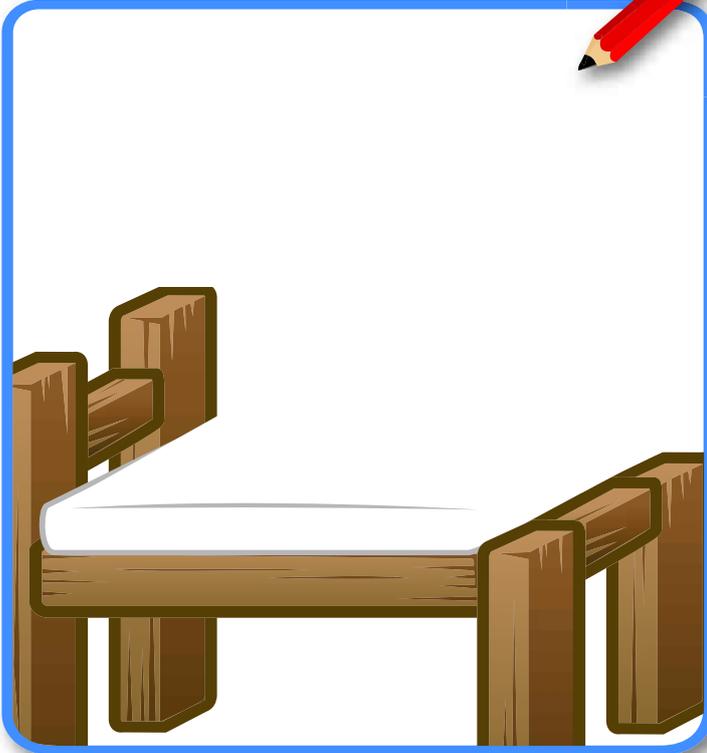
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B



Draw Jesus healing Simon's sick mother-in-law

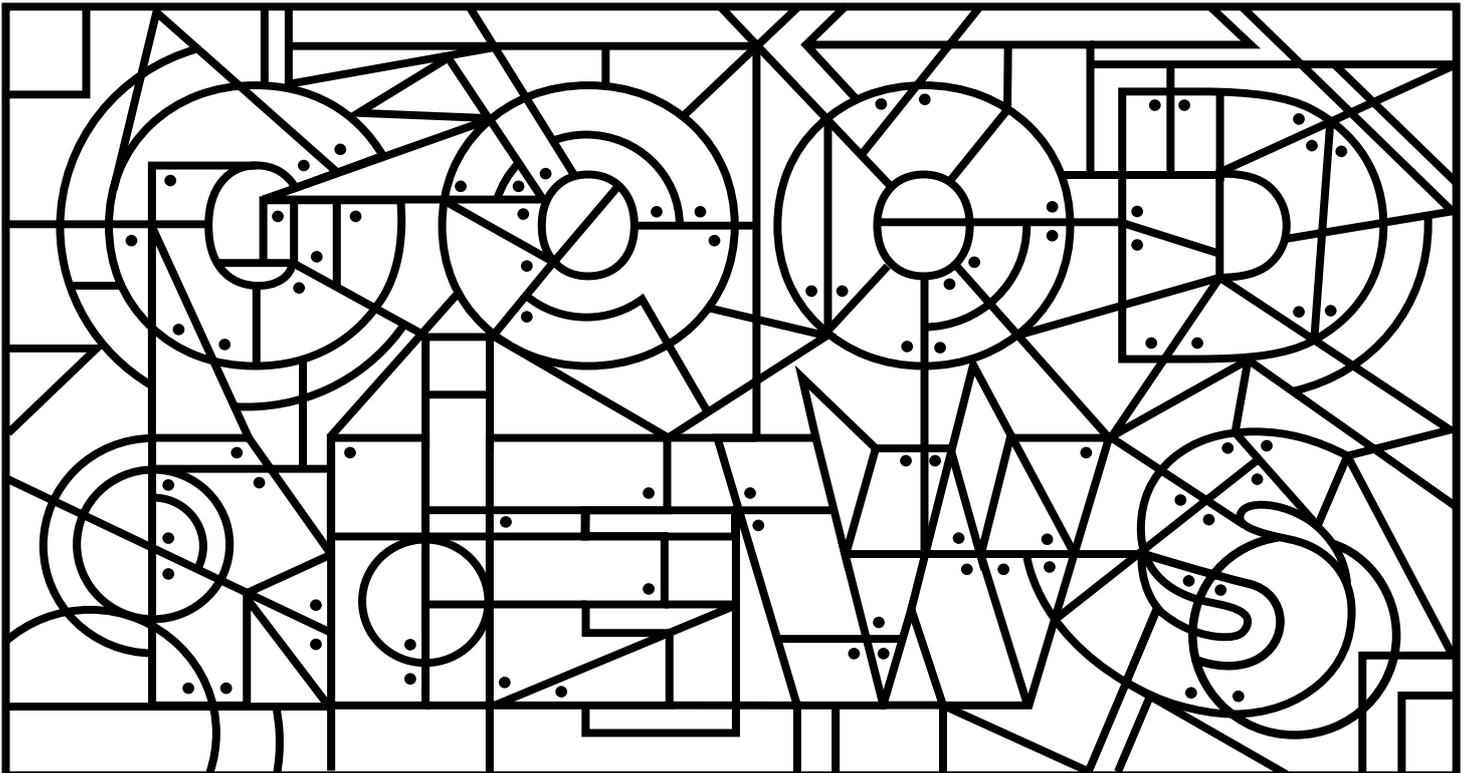


Jesus went away to be alone and pray. Where are some places that you pray?



Four horizontal rectangular boxes with purple borders, intended for writing answers to the prayer question.

Colour in all the shapes that contain dots to reveal what Jesus wants everyone to know.



SUNDAY READINGS

READ AT HOME

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

4 February 2024



Collect

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,
they may be defended always by your protection.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Readings and Commentaries

The book of Job, from which we hear a fragment today, is widely regarded as a masterpiece of literature. Like the grain of sand that provokes the production of the pearl, the troublesome and age-old question of human suffering has given birth to epic poetry. For all its length and beauty, however, the book offers no conclusive answer as to why the innocent suffer and why injustice is rampant in the world.

Contending both with well-meaning friends (“Job’s comforters”) keen to bring him to his senses and with almighty God, Job resolutely defends his claim of innocence, all the while subject to a welter of emotions. In the face of God’s incomparable majesty, power and wisdom, Job is finally reduced to repentance and silence. We are left to wonder whether the only way we can hold together the world’s pain and God’s sovereignty is to surrender.

After wrestling with the painful issue of the fate of his fellow-Jews, Paul is prompted to exclaim: “How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! ... To him be glory for ever! Amen” (Rom 11:33.36).

A reading from the prophet Job

7:1–4, 6–7

Job began to speak:

Is not man's life on earth nothing more
than pressed service,
his time no better than hired drudgery?
Like the slave, sighing for the shade,
or the workman with no thought but his wages,
months of delusion I have assigned to me,
nothing for my own but nights of grief.
Lying in bed I wonder, 'When will it be day?'
Risen I think, 'How slowly evening comes!'
Restlessly I fret till twilight falls.
Swifter than a weaver's shuttle my days have passed,
and vanished, leaving no hope behind.
Remember that my life is but a breath,
and that my eyes will never again see joy.

First Reading

The very size of the book (42 chapters), let alone the fundamental question with which it wrestles, would have given the book of Job claim for significant representation in the lectionary. Alas, that is not the case at all. In three years there are just two short extracts, one for today and another for the Twelfth Sunday this year. The latter is rarely heard because the vagaries of the Lent and Easter seasons severely limit the observance of Sundays 7-12.

More's the pity, then, that today's text is an unrelieved lament at the joylessness of human life. Job bewails the utter drudgery of existence. It is nothing more than a hopeless repetition of days and nights that offer no relief from toil and grief. These are sentiments found also in the book of Ecclesiastes (Qoheleth), but there they are offset by sunny breaks.

Even the connection with the gospel is tenuous. Today's reading from Mark does acknowledge sickness and demonic possession, but in the context of Jesus' power to heal. It bears good news, not bad. The upshot is that we get no glimpse of the poetry, power and beauty of the book of Job. Even though it doesn't resolve the problem of suffering, it does take us to heights as well as depths along the way.

Nonetheless, readers have the responsibility to proclaim Job's lament as we have it, without moderating its bitterness. The assembly must be allowed to hear Job's cry in all its anguish. As usual the NRSV text is gender-inclusive.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 146:1–6

R. Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted.

or

R. Alleluia!

Praise the Lord for he is good;
sing to our God for he is loving;
to him our praise is due. **R.**

The Lord builds up Jerusalem
and brings back Israel's exiles,
he heals the broken-hearted,
he binds up all their wounds.
he fixes the number of the stars;
he calls each one by its name. **R.**

Our Lord is great and almighty;
his wisdom can never be measured.
The Lord raises the lowly;
he humbles the wicked to the dust. **R.**

Responsorial Psalm

With the psalm, the pendulum of human emotion swings from one extreme to the other. Job's black despair is suddenly replaced by the psalmist's exultant praise. Psalm 146/147 is one of the group of psalms (146-150) that bring the whole Book of Psalms to a happy conclusion. Each of them begins with an "Alleluia!" and the command to offer praise. All are energetic hymns that confess God's goodness and greatness.

The response, "Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted," contains an allusion to the grief-stricken Job, but nothing more. It's God's love, goodness, compassion, power and wisdom that are joyfully celebrated. One point of interest lies in the mention both of the exile and of stars of the sky. Together they bring the Babylonians and their belief in the power of the stars to mind. The psalmist happily affirms the supremacy of Israel's God who "fixes the number of the stars" and "calls each one by name."

Along with proclaiming the psalm in a suitably joyful tone, readers need to take care with the variation in verse length, from three lines to six and then back to four. Appropriate inflections and visual cues will guide the assembly in its praying of the response.

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul
to the Corinthians 9:16–19, 22– 23**

I do not boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! If I had chosen this work myself, I might have been paid for it, but as I have not, it is a responsibility which has been put into my hands. Do you know what my reward is? It is this: in my preaching, to be able to offer the Good News free, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me.

So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessing.

**A reading from the holy Gospel
according to Mark 1:29–39**

On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on them.

That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was.

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, 'Everybody is looking for you.' He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came.' And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.

Second Reading

From consideration of marriage, virginity and sexuality in chapter 7, Paul turns to the controversial issue of food offered to idols. The Corinthians have sought his advice as to whether it was permissible for them to eat it or not. The lectionary omits all of the short chapter 8 that introduces the problem, and also much of chapter 9 in which Paul asserts his apostolic authority. Today's reading picks up the concluding stage of his argument where he plays with the notion of freedom.

As we discover from his letters, Paul is not averse to boasting. Here his claim is that he proclaims the gospel for free. Ironically, he first declares that he himself is not free. He has no choice but to preach – it is his sacred duty. But by not charging for this service, unlike other preachers and teachers of his time, he is free of the obligations that fees might entail.

This in turn allows him to choose to be unfree, that is, to be "the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could." This is not a strategy of ingratiating himself with different classes of people for the sake of social acceptance. It's a missionary tactic "to save some at any cost."

Paul is in argumentative mode here, justifying his methods. He wants to get the Corinthians to understand the freedom he enjoys and how he chooses to exercise it. He will go on to apply this to the question they have posed. Careful examination of how Paul develops his case will pay dividends for readers and the assembly alike. This is a reading to be delivered forthrightly.

Gospel

Jesus' willingness to do God's work on the sabbath continues with his cure of Simon's mother-in-law, whereas the people wait until the holy day is over before they bring the afflicted to him. Simon Peter's house in Capernaum – and perhaps Jesus' missionary base – has been claimed to be identified by modern archaeologists.

The cure of Simon's mother-in-law has an allusion to the resurrection. Mark says Jesus "helped her up," using a word that suggests being raised. There's also a parallel with the exorcism that precedes the cure. Just as the unclean spirit came out of the man in the synagogue, so "the fever left her." Mark again records that the devils Jesus cast out "knew who he was." His command that they stay silent testifies further to his authority over them.

By situating Jesus' prayer between a busy day of healing and a new round of travelling, teaching and exorcising, Mark makes it clear that this prayer is mission-oriented. There's nothing escapist or self-isolating about it. It's all about "why I came." This reading lends itself to lively and engaging proclamation. Well delivered, it can fuel missionary zeal.

An alternative translation of the scripture readings is given here from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). This may be particularly useful for those in parishes which use the NRSV Lectionary.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING (NRSV)

A reading from the book of Job

7:1–4, 6–7

Job spoke to his friends:

"Do not human beings have a hard service on earth,
and are not their days like the days of a labourer?
Like a slave who longs for the shadow,
and like labourers who look for their wages,
so I am allotted months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.
"When I lie down I say, 'When shall I rise?'
But the night is long, and I am full of tossing until dawn.
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,
and come to their end without hope.
Remember that my life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good."

SECOND READING (NRSV)

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

9:16–19, 22–23

If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting,
for an obligation is laid on me,
and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!
For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward;
but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission.
What then is my reward?
Just this:
that in my proclamation
I may make the gospel free of charge,
so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.
For though I am free with respect to all,
I have made myself a slave to all,
so that I might win more of them.
To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak.
I have become all things to all people,
that I might by all means save some.
I do it all for the sake of the gospel,
so that I may share in its blessings.

GOSPEL (NRSV)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

1:29–39

As soon as Jesus and his disciples left the synagogue,
they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.
Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever;
and they told Jesus about her at once.
He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up.
Then the fever left her; and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sundown,
they brought to Jesus all who were sick or possessed with demons.
And the whole city was gathered around the door.
And he cured many who were sick with various diseases,
and cast out many demons;
and he would not permit the demons to speak,
because they knew him.
In the morning, while it was still very dark,
Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place,
and there he prayed.
And Simon and his companions hunted for him.
When they found him, they said to him,
"Everyone is searching for you."
He answered, "Let us go on to the neighbouring towns,
so that I may proclaim the message there also;
for that is what I came out to do."
And Jesus went throughout Galilee,
proclaiming the message in their synagogues
and casting out demons.

Concluding Prayer

Solemn Blessing (Ordinary Time III)

May almighty God bless us in his kindness
and pour out saving wisdom upon us.

Amen.

May he nourish us always with the teachings of the faith
and make us persevere in holy deeds.

Amen.

May he turn our steps towards himself
and show us the path of charity and peace.

Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come down on us and remain with us for ever.

Amen.

(Adapted from the Solemn Blessing for Ordinary Time III, Roman Missal p. 714)

PRAYER IS LIFE



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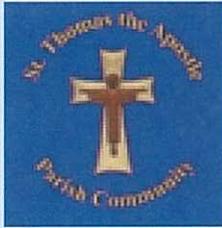
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Friars Room

Greater Box Hill Parish
1087 Whitehorse Rd
Box Hill

**Tuesday 20 Feb
5.00pm – 7.30pm**

The Episcopal Vicar for the Eastern Region invites parish leaders, parish councillors and interested parishioners from parishes in the inner eastern region to an information session on Tuesday 20 February, 5.00pm - 7.30 pm, at The Friars Room, adjacent to St Francis Xavier Church, 1087 Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill (Parking behind the Church off Dorking Rd). We will look at how best to interpret the parish profile from the 2021 census and the trends revealed and then share suggestions about how this will inform our efforts in Mission. Inquiries: phone. 9401 6371



You are cordially invited to St. Thomas The Apostle Parish & Primary School's 70th anniversary

Past and present parishioners, staff and students, and families –
Join us for a day of celebration and thanksgiving. The day begins with morning mass, followed by lunch and an afternoon of entertainment for all. It's St. Patrick's Day so come with a touch of **green!**

- *School tours*
- *Kids' activities*
- *Video presentations*
- *Roving MC*



Event date:

Sunday, 17th March 2024

Location:

St. Thomas The Apostle Parish & Primary School
57 Central Road, Blackburn VIC 3130

Time:

Mass commences at 10:30am
Lunch & activities start at 12:00pm

Please confirm your attendance and number attending for catering purposes by **14th February 2024** at <https://www.trybooking.com/CLTUA> or a sign up sheet has been provided in the narthex.

We look forward to seeing you!



Lourdes Day Mass

Saturday 10TH February 2024
at 10:30am
at St Patrick's Cathedral



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AUSTRALIA



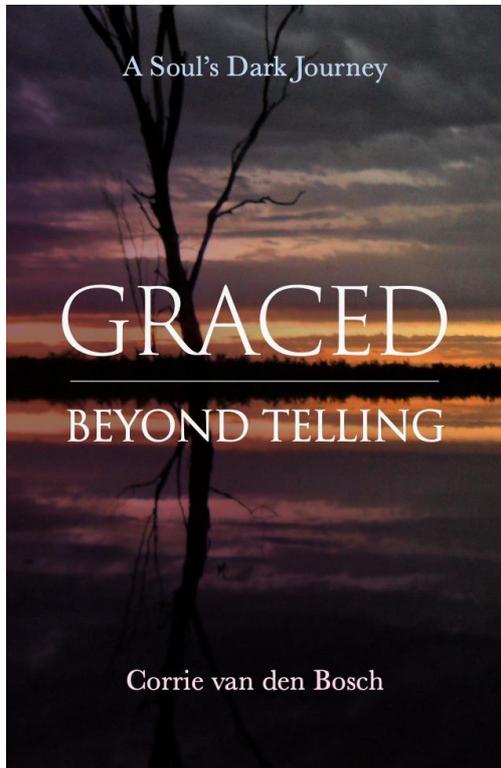
ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL
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CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

The Missionary Sisters of Service
are delighted to invite you to the launch of a new book:

Graced Beyond Telling
by Corrie van den Bosch



Date & time: 15 February, 7.00 p.m.

Place: St Thomas the Apostle school hall,
67 Central Road, Blackburn 3130

RSVP: (for catering purposes) by 10 February on
<https://www.trybooking.com/COATA>
OR ring Corrie on 0425 736 747.

“Graced Beyond Telling is a love story of great depth, beauty and honesty as Corrie shares both the outer and inner journey of her life and call. ...It holds together light and darkness, dislocation and connection, adventure and ordinariness, pain and delight, wonder and struggle. Laced through these paradoxes is a resilience of spirit and a profound openness of heart to a God who is always present – even in seeming absence.”

– Madeline Duckett rsm

**2023 also marks 80 years since the founding
of the Missionary Sisters of Service.**

The book launch is the first of our celebrations to mark this anniversary, as we recall the countless ways our congregation has been gifted and blessed through our eighty years. We'd love you to join us.



Graced Beyond Telling will be available at the launch and through the MSS website
<https://missionarysisters.org.au/product-category/books/>

Enquiries: corrie@missionarysisters.org.au



Our Lady of Sion College

TALK AND TOUR MORNINGS

Please visit
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APPLICATIONS FOR YEAR 7, 2026

close 16 August 2024

EMBRACE LIFE AT SION

Talk and Tour Mornings for Term 1

MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY, 9.30 AM

FRIDAY 19 APRIL, 9.30 AM

Our Lady of Sion College
Catholic Girls' College Years 7-12
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